

Criteria for High-Quality Instructional Materials for Social Studies

Criterion 1: Standards Alignment

Materials are aligned to the state social studies standards.

- **1a.** Materials incorporate the majority of grade-/course-level standards in a way that promotes rigor and depth of learning.
- **1b.** Materials present a clear pathway for educators to address the content and skills in a coherent sequence, grounded in the standards.

Criterion 2: Social Studies Practices

Materials emphasize social studies practices and skills students apply when engaging with social studies content.

- **2a.** Materials are organized in a way that provides consistent opportunities for sustained inquiry through questioning and opportunities for students to generate and reflect upon their own questions, understandings, and inquiries.
- **2b.** Materials provide opportunities for students to build knowledge about content or concepts through analysis of a coherent selection of strategically sequenced, discipline-specific sources, both primary and secondary.
- **2c.** Materials provide regular and varied opportunities for students to engage in disciplinary thinking, reading, writing, listening, speaking, and analyzing like scholars in social studies.
- **2d.** Materials provide regular and varied opportunities for students to engage in evidence-based reasoning and discourse, evaluate and use evidence from sources, and draw conclusions and construct arguments.
- **2e.** Materials provide opportunities for students to apply conclusions to identify and act on problems, issues, or needs in their tribal, local, state, nation, and global communities.
 - **2e.i.** Materials provide students with opportunities to identify, evaluate, and select problems, issues, or needs they want to address.
 - **2e.ii.** Materials provide educators with resources to facilitate the application of students identifying, evaluating, and selecting problems, issues, or needs they want to address.

Criterion 3: Equity and Inclusion

Materials provide equitable inclusion and representation of diverse perspectives and experiences.

- **3a.** Materials provide educators with tools to facilitate learning experiences in response to their unique student population to support an equitable and inclusive classroom environment.
- **3b.** Materials center a diversity of perspectives, voices, and narratives on the topic being studied.
- **3c.** Materials challenge students to consider how identity and social position shape people’s perceptions of events, and encourage honest and informed discussions about power, prejudice, and oppression.
- **3d.** Materials support educators and students in engaging with difficult topics and participating in culturally sensitive learning activities.

Criterion 4: Usability

Materials support educators’ ability to effectively plan and use instructional materials and resources for instruction and develop their content and pedagogical knowledge to further student learning.

- **4a.** The total amount of content is paced for completion within the allotted amount of time for instruction and allows maximum opportunities for students to deepen their social studies content knowledge and skills.
- **4b.** Materials are well organized and support educators’ understanding of social studies content and skills.

Criterion 5: Instructional Supports

Materials provide a variety of instructional supports and strategies for scaffolding learning.

- **5a.** Materials use a variety of appropriate scaffolds and social studies instructional strategies to accommodate students’ learning needs.
- **5b.** Materials include appropriate supports, extensions, or scaffolds for reading, writing, listening, and speaking in social studies.

Criterion 6: Assessment Practices

High-quality materials provide a balance of formative and summative assessments that clearly measure students' learning progress, inform social studies instruction, and provide feedback to students to improve their own learning.

- **6a.** Materials encompass a balanced system of assessments that includes a variety of high-quality formative and summative assessments.
- **6b.** Materials embed formative assessments throughout units to evaluate student learning progress and inform social studies instruction.
- **6c.** Materials include summative assessments in a way that allows students to demonstrate deep knowledge of social studies content, concepts, and skills.

Sources

- www.edreports.org
- [NE Materials Matter](#) (NE)
- [Louisiana Department of Education Evidence Guide](#) (LA)
- [Rubric to Evaluate the Quality of Units in Social Studies](#) (IA)